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ABSTRACT

The available literature on white flight, or, more properly, school resegregation -- the phenomenon of white withdrawal (total or partial) from desegregated schools -- is reviewed in this paper which also reports some new research in this area. The distinction is made between those schools located on the fringes of the inner city, which first desegregate and then resegregate as the minority community moves outward from the ghetto, and the different situation in which there is governmental action to bring about school desegregation. Among the factors discussed are parental concerns about educational quality, student safety, and social status; the importance of the proportion of minority students; the significance of the relative cost of schooling alternatives; the interaction with neighborhood racial change; the impact of anticipated future racial change; and, the quality of racial relations in desegregated schools. An extensive list of references is provided. Among the suggested public policies that are offered are the serious need for a thorough, national study of white flight, and the need to emphasize the quality of school integration and to develop and communicate practical approaches to overcoming the cultural and class barriers between the races. (Author/AM)

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White Flight: Some Hypotheses

Presented at the Annual Meeting
of the American Educational
Research Association, April 19-23,
1976.

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According to a recent summary of available research on school desegregation prepared by the National Institute of Education for the Ford administration, there is great difference in white flight among American cities, and no one knows the governmental policies which might control this phenomenon.[1] As various authors have noted (Orfield, 1973; Hansen, 1972) the social sciences seem to offer little in understanding (or controlling) the problem of resegregation, with no systematic national effort being made to study the impact of school desegregation over a period of years. In the furor over some of the recent statements made by Coleman, little attention has been paid to one of the major points of his initial paper (1975b): namely, the failure of the federal government to do any serious analysis of the massive data which it routinely collects on school racial proportions.

The purpose of this paper is to review the available literature on white flight, or, more properly, school resegregation: the phenomenon of white withdrawal (total or partial) from desegregated schools.

This is an extremely difficult task. As the recent debate between Coleman (1975a, 1975c, 1976a, 1976b) and his protagonists (Green and Pettigrew, 1975, 1976; Jackson, 1975; Pettigrew and Green, 1976) has indicated, desegregated schools exist within a multitude of contexts, and each of these contexts influences what does or does not happen in the school. There is an ongoing process of suburbanization which surely would have happened if there were no racial minorities, but which disproportionately affects the white population; there is a major downturn in white birth rates leading to loss of white enrollment in most school districts; both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies are complicated by the fact that school attendance areas and school district boundaries change over time, and many urban school systems have boundaries not coterminus with city boundaries. Further, there are minority groups in most school systems other than blacks. Some authors (Farley, 1975b, for example) add these other minority students to the white population; when analyzing white flight; others (Coleman, for example) do not.

It is important, therefore, to stress that Farley and Taeuber (1974) are quite right when they state that the available data is poor and the methodology weak in the study of white flight from desegregated schooling. A review of the available research reveals a wide variety of approaches, with some studies stressing factors which are totally ignored in others. The phrase "hypothesis" used in the title of this paper is, therefore, meant seriously. The gaps and inconsistencies in the available data are such that there is a considerable degree of uncertainty not only about the factors contributing to white flight, but about the way in which these factors interact. It is possible that this summary omits major factors, or that further investigation will show some of these factors to be unimportant.

Two Initial Distinctions

One of the first things that becomes apparent in the study of "white flight" is the degree to which issues of race and class are consistently confounded. Blacks and most other minority groups are, of course, disproportionately poor. The poor do not do well in school, and schools where the poor are concentrated are no more attractive to minority group parents (especially middle class minority parents) than they are to white parents. Orfield (1975) notes that some 10,000 black students in Washington, DC, are in private schools, and Lord (1975) reports that the schools of Richmond, Virginia, are now experiencing "black flight" as they become increasingly black and poor, and unattractive to the black middle class. This phenomenon was also noted by Pettigrew in his senate testimony (U. S. Senate, 1970). For purposes of simplicity the phrase "white flight" will be used in this paper, but it should be understood that the phenomenon is a class phenomenon as well as a racial phenomenon.

Secondly, it is useful to make a distinction between "flight" and "non-entrance." The phrase "white flight" tends to suggest that white students were attending a school, the school was integrated, and then white students found this undesirable

and left. In fact, as Rossell (1975-76) notes, reported drops in white attendance in the "first year" of school desegregation really mean that these students never showed up at all. It wasn't that they experienced desegregation and found it undesirable; it was rather that they declined to try the experience in the first place. Studies of racially changing neighborhoods (Rose, 1970: Molotch, 1972) note that, even when there is no abnormal rate of white departure from these neighborhoods, white entrance can (and often does) drop sharply. As we shall see in considering the interaction of the racially changing school with the racially changing neighborhood, this non-entrance can consist disproportionately of families with school-age children. It can be a difficult and expensive decision to move if there is some dissatisfaction with local schools. It is a great deal easier, if one is house-hunting and hears that a desegregation decision is pending, or that people are uncertain about what direction the schools will take, to choose a different neighborhood in which to purchase a house.

In addition to non-entrance into the neighborhood served by a particular set of schools (elementary and secondary), there is also the issue of non-entrance into a particular school. Schools are particularly susceptible to non-entrance, not only in the sense that there are private and parochial alternatives available, but because the transition from elementary school to junior high, and from junior high to senior high (each school often serving a wider attendance area and having a different reputation and racial composition) repeatedly presents parents and students with the decision to enter or not enter.

Thus when reading Orfield's (1975) report that the school system of Inglewood, California, went from about 25% black the year before court-ordered integration was put into effect to 35% the following September, it is not necessary to assume that all of this loss was caused by white families who either left town or sought other schooling. Some of the loss may well have been due to white families <u>not</u> moving in on hearing of impending integration, and thus failing to replace families

who, in the normal cause of events, would have moved anyway. What seems at first glance to be "anticipatory flight" may, in fact, be "anticipatory nonentrance." Indeed, one of the problems with letting desegregation suits drag on, unresolved, for years is precisely that over those years the normal proportion of white families may leave the city involved and, uncertain of the future, an abnormal proportion of white families with children may elect not to move in. This may be no small factor in a population as mobile as that of the United States.

According to recent data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census (1975), 38.7% of white metropolitan residents were living in a different house in 1974 than the one in which they lived in 1970. Thus even over relatively short time periods a consistent pattern of white nonentrance into either a school or neighborhood can have a significant effect on the racial proportions of that school or neighborhood.

Why flee?

Surprisingly, there seems to be little research available on the motives that lead parents to withdraw their children from desegregated schools. Such discussions as are found center on three areas: parental perceptions of school quality; parental perceptions of student safety in the desegregated school; and parental concerns about social status. In view of the very limited data, however, any conclusions about the relative importance of these concerns (or their actual impact on the decision to withdraw from a desegregated school) must remain very tentative.

Neil Sullivan, the superintendent of schools who presided over the desegregation of the Berkeley (California) public schools, describes the main fears of white parents when school desegregation is proposed as fear for their children's safety and fear that educational quality will be lost (Terkel, 1968). Such fears may be exacerbated when students are assigned to schools located in inner city areas; Lord (1975) cites some very high rates of student loss under such circumstances.

Concerns about educational quality seem widespread; Orfield (1973) cites a national poll showing that a fourth of the public believes that the test scores of white students decline sharply in desegregated schools. Although it is generally not the case that such declines in white achievement actually occur, the quality of research in this area leaves much to be desired (Orfield, 1973; St. John, 1975). In this regard, traditional school district reporting practices can cause problems. If, for example, lower-achieving minority students from an inner city area are mixed with higher-achieving white students from a more affluent area, the school's mean test scores can be expected to go down even though the more affluent students are doing as well as always and the minority students are doing better than before. Depending on how the data is released to the public, quite different impressions can be created.

Further, it does not seem honest to deny that many characteristics of inner city life militate against success in the bookish atmosphere of the school. Petroni, Hirsch and Petroni (1970) describe minority students actively seeking a place in the school in the face of criticism by their fellow minority students who see preparing for college as "white" behavior. Young and Bess (1975) cite a Wall Street Journal interview which also discusses the pressures not to study placed by some minority students on their peers. It would be easy to point out that some white students put similar pressures on their peers, but it is not as simple as that. Rosenberg and Simmons (undated) found in a 1968 study based on a random sample of 2625 Baltimore students in 26 schools (3rd to 12th grade) that school grades seemed to make less impact on the self-esteem of black children, especially those doing very poorly in school. Life in the ghetto generates attitudes,values and behaviors quite different from those found in more affluent areas. White and middle-class minority parents who fear these attitudes and have the means to flee them, lest their children be influenced by them, may well be inclined to do so.

On the other hand, the literature contains a significant number of examples of white parents voluntarily participating in school integration programs when they were convinced that their children were safe and the educational quality of the schools was good. In many large cities parochial schools are located in older areas of town and have significant minority representation in their student bodies. Yet white, middle-class students voluntarily pay tuition and travel from suburban and outer-city areas in order to attend these schools. Boston, despite all the present furor there over school desegregation, has run Trotter School since the fall of 1969 on a 50/50 black/white ratio (no author, 1971a). Trotter School has a new, expensive plant with modified open classroom instruction, learning centers and other educational advantages not ordinarily available, and white students are easily recruited. According to press reports, Richardson, Texas (a suburb of Dallas) avoided a court order to desegregate by attracting sufficient whites to voluntarily transfer into a previously all-black school. The school has a 16-1 pupil-teacher ratio, a faculty 80% of whom have the MA degree, and offers many extras (arts and crafts, foreign languages, drama, music, gymnastics, planetarium). More white students applied than could be accommodated. Although open enrollment is usually dismissed as an ineffective tool for large-scale integration, McAdams (1974) surveys an impressive list of schools which successfully convinced students to transfer voluntarily when the quality of integrated education was clearly high.

Parental perceptions of student safety may also be involved in decisions to reject desegregated schooling. Bobbitt (1972) describes the differing perceptions of each other that black and white students bring to the desegregated school. There are often different behavior patterns and ways of handling conflict and hostility. Rumors may fly as latent parental fears are triggered by incidents which would otherwise be ignored. In some cases, of course, schools are <u>not</u> safe, and physical attacks, shakedowns and threats are real occurrences. Schafft (1975) describes the fear of going to the bathroom held by white students in one predominantly black

school, and the degree to which they avoided out-of-school activities. What really seems to be involved in some of these fears is the fact that, though desegregated, these schools are not truly integrated. Although black and white students are physically present in the same school, the degree of friendship, understanding and community is very low. I would like to return to this point toward the end of this paper.

Finally, just as some individuals do not wish to live in a neighborhood with members of a group whose social status they view as below their own (see Guest and Weed, 1976), some parents who do not have specific concerns about educational quality or safety as such may still object to having their children attend school with students from a lower social class. As Giles, Gatlin and Cataldo (forthcoming) point out, desegregation often results in not only an influx of black children into the white child's environment, but also an influx of lower class children into a middle class environment. Among parents of high income and education, they found class prejudice (as opposed to racial prejudice) significantly related to protest behavior (attending school board meetings, writing letters, phoning the school board, etc.,to protest school desegregation). An excellent description of how the different social classes react to desegregation proposals is given by Rubin (1972) in her account of the polarization of the Richmond (California) Unified School District. These reactions illustrate again how the whole issue of school desegregation is as much a matter of class conflict as of racial conflict.

I. Neighborhoods and Schools in Racial Transition

School desegregation situations may be divided into two broad classes: those which occur without any government intervention, reflecting the neighborhood integration of the attendance district served by the school; and those which occur because either the courts, the local school board or the executive branch of either state or federal government have intervened to desegregate previously segregated schools. It is impossible to study the first category of desegregated

(and often resegregating) schools without also studying the process of neighborhood racial change. To do otherwise would be to study them in a demographic vacuum, a charge recently leveled against Coleman (Rossell, 1975-76; Pettigrew and Green, 1976).

Atlanta, for example, has been judicially cited (Levin and Moise, 1975; Wegmann, 1975) as having a great deal of "white flight" from its school system, so much so as to render further attempts at integration futile. Atlanta's school system, once majority white, was 69% minority in 1970. The minority population of the city as a whole, however, also went from 38% minority in 1960 to 52% minority in 1970. Note that the proportion of minority students in the public schools is typically half again as much as the proportion of minority citizens in the general population of central cities (Wegmann, 1975; Farley and Taeuber, 1974), so that a 52% minority population in the city and a 69% minority population in the school system is not at all unusual. Hence the change in the racial make-up of Atlanta's public schools clearly took place within the context of a general change in the racial make-up of the entire city (witness the fact, for example, that Atlanta now has a black mayor). Indeed, all of Coleman's findings as he initially presented them (1975b) must be considered to have happened within the context of the changing neighborhoods of large central cities, since a check by the New York Times (July 11, 1975) revealed that there was no court-ordered busing, rezoning or other coerced integration in any of the 19 cities Coleman initially studied.

This is not, however, to suggest that these changes are not of great significance. According to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (1975), enrollment in the 100 largest school districts (which have half of the nation's black pupils) dropped by 280,000 students between 1970 and 1972. Since there was a gain of 146,000 black students during this same period, the data suggest a very considerable loss of white students. Some of this loss, of course, can be attributed to a

drop in the white birth rate and other factors. Nonetheless it is clear that whites with children are disproportionately likely to live in suburban areas. According to the Bureau of the Census (1975), 60.1% of the white population of metropolitan areas, aged 18 and over, lived in the suburbs in 1974; but 66.6% of the school-aged whites (aged 5 to 17) were to be found in the suburbs.[2] Again, this need not be totally attributed to problems with schools; suburbanization would no doubt be going on if there were no racial minorities in the United States (Weaver, 1975), and suburbs would hold special attractions for families with school-age children under any conditions. The data suggests, however, that schools are not uninvolved.

The most obvious fact about the neighborhood context of school racial proportions is the very high degree of residential segregation that characterizes every city in the United States (Taeuber and Taeuber, 1965). There exist only a very few stable interracial neighborhoods in American cities, and these are generally found only when the black population of the city as a whole is stable (which, due to natural increase and in-migration, has <u>not</u> generally been typical of American cities). Some of this segregation is due, of course, to differences in income level; Zelder (1970) estimates that perhaps 30 to 50 percent of racial segregation can be attributed to economic factors. This estimate may be high; Taeuber (1968) and Hermalin and Farley (1973) present rather convincing arguments that economic factors do not account for much of the concentrations of blacks in the central city. According to the Census Bureau (1975), blacks constituted only 5% of suburban populations in both 1970 and 1974, despite the fact that a majority of metropolitan residents now live in the suburbs rather than the central city. A more reasonable explanation may lie in the division of central cities into black and white housing markets, as Molotch (1972) suggests. This seems to be a structure which is not easily avoided. Wolf (1976), in a critical review of evidence presented to the court in the Detroit school desegregation case, cites moving testimony by several black real estate brokers who spoke of the rebuffs, subterfuge,

and humiliation which they endured in attempting to secure listings in white areas.

If all this is to be placed in context, it is important to be aware that, even ignoring race, ethnic residential segregation is by no means a thing of the past in the United States. According to Guest and Weed (1976), who studied ethnic residential segregation in Boston, Cleveland and Seattle, the "old" American groups of predominantly northern European descent, various "newer" groups of later immigration, and racial minorities are all relatively segregated from each other. Ethnic segregation is at least equal to if not greater than that by occupation, and much greater than that by family or life-cycle status. Nor did ethnic segregation seem to be decreasing much, at least from 1960 to 1970. Much of this ethnic segregation is a matter of relative social status, though not all. The findings of Guest and Weed are consistent with the view that group social status is related to ethnic residential segregation.

Black group social status is, of course, low, and black residential segregation high. It is on the fringes of the black ghetto that interracial neighborhoods are commonly found. Beach (1975) has prepared an extensive bibliography of research literature describing these areas. A number of scholars (Morrill, 1965; Rose, 1970, 1972) have built computer models in an attempt to simulate and predict the patterns of ghetto expansion, with interesting if imperfect results. While the exact directions of ghetto expansion are not easy to predict, the general results have been observable for many decades. Grodzins (1957) cites the example of Chicago, where not a single instance could be found between 1940 and 1950 of a neighborhood with a mixed population (25 to 75 percent non-white) in which succession from white to Negro occupancy was arrested.

While it is important to understand how the process of school and neighborhood resegregation proceeds, it is initially necessary to point out that there is no escaping one fundamental fact: given constant density, a growing minority

population which stays within the central city combined with a white population free to move out of the central city will inevitably produce an increasing number of segregated neighborhoods and segregated schools. As Stinchcombe, McDill and Walker (1968) note in their study of this phenomenon in Baltimore, the city simply runs out of white schools with which to integrate.

What is striking as one review studies of the process of racial transition on the fringes of the black central city is the degree to which white non-entrance is much more involved than white flight as such. This is not to deny that there are some individuals who move from racially changing neighborhoods specifically to avoid an interracial setting. The fundamental pattern, however, seems to be one of blacks moving short distances into racially mixed neighborhoods, while whites fail to compete with them for the available housing. Rose (1970), in a study of Milwaukee, found that only four percent of a sample of Negro movers selected housing more than 10 blocks beyond the original ghetto neighborhood. At the same time he found that, beyond 30% Negro occupancy, the number of new white housing purchases fell off sharply. He also cites other data indicating this as a common pattern; neighborhood racial change, he argues, is less a matter of invasion than of retreat. Aldrich (1975), in a review of the literature on ecological succession, also reported no particular rise in the rate of residential mobility in changing neighborhoods. What is important is that no rise is necessary to cause rapid racial transition; as has already been noted, the Census Bureau found 38.7% of white metropolitan residents at a different house in 1974 than the one in which they lived in 1970. Normal mobility will make a great deal of housing available throughout the metropolitan area; so long as blacks seek to occupy housing on the fringes of the ghetto while whites avoid it, racial change is inevitable. Rapkin and Grigsby (1960), in their studies in the Philadelphia area, found such a sharp drop in white demand, as did Molotch (1972) in his study of the South Shore area of Chicago. Indeed, Molotch found many landlords who did not want black occupancy but had no other choice because whiteswere not interested. Such neighborhoods

then go through a transition from a white to a black housing market.

It seems that it is in this context that any consideration of the "tipping point" controversy should take place. Various authors, including myself, have referred to a point where white departures accelerate or at least become irreversible, leading shortly to a neighborhood or school becoming all-black (Grodzins, 1957; Hansen, 1968; Wegmann, 1975; No Author, 1972; the best conceptual discussion is Schelling, 1969). Wolf (1976) has pointed out that this concept was accepted without challenge in the Detroit desegregation case, and references to it can be found in other court cases (Levin and Moise, 1975). As we shall see, however, while there are occasional "surges" of white departure in individual schools, the more general phenomenon seems to be a relatively constant pattern of black entrance, some white departure (much of which would have presumably taken place anyway), and notable white non-entrance (Stinchcombe, McDill and Walker, 1969; Wolf, 1963). Thus it now seems to me that "tipping" is not a particularly useful concept to describe racial change in either neighborhoods or schools.

Anticipation of Future Racial Change

One key factor in considering the reluctance of whites to purchase homes in racially mixed neighborhoods is the degree to which the present racial proportions are projected into the future by potential entrants. It may or may not be significant to discuss the racial balance at which whites and blacks feel there is "enough" integration (Glazer, 1974), but what is really crucial to most home-buyers (and parents enrolling their children in school) is their view of what is likely to happen in the future. The purchase of a home is a significant commitment; similarly, most parents would like to leave their children in the same school for a period of years. In a city with a large minority population, in which area after area and school after school has "turned," there is an obvious tendency to assume that a school or area with <u>any</u> degree of minority population will be "next to go," especially if the area is physically close to the ghetto.

Wolf (1963) reports such a reaction in the Russel Woods area of Detroit after only one or two black families moved in. White demand dropped markedly. As has already been noted, some of the drop in white enrollment that occurs before school desegregation actually begins may be caused by a similar anticipatory response. Surely the striking white loss in the Inglewood, California, school system (Kurtz, 1975; Orfield, 1975) is not unrelated to Inglewood's location, bordering on the Los Angeles ghetto, with significant black movement into Inglewood well before court-ordered desegregation began.

In areas where black and white residents are working to maintain an interracial neighborhood, their most difficult struggle is to attract white residents willing to move in (Wolf and Lebeaux, 1967; Molotch, 1972). The frequent temptation of such groups is to work on more easily obtainable goals, such as increased city services and other neighborhood improvements. As Molotch suggests, however, this is often self-defeating, since such actions make the area that much more attractive to prospective black entrants, but often fail to attract white entrants. Despite years of intense efforts, Molotch found that such activities made little impact on the degree of racial change experienced in the South Shore area of Chicago.

The School and Neighborhood Change

The schools play an important role in this process of neighborhood change. First of all, a study in Milwaukee found that in interracial neighborhoods the proportion black within the school is consistently higher than the proportion black within the neighborhood served by the school (Wegmann, 1975). And schools, like double beds, enforce a certain intimacy. One can ignore a neighbor down the street; it is harder to ignore someone in the next seat. The school, moreover, is a social institution which serves as the central focal point for much community interaction, just as the social relationships formed in school are carried back to the neighborhood. Molotch (1972) cites a study by Roper who found that the

bulk of neighboring behavior in middle class settings was due directly or indirectly to the visiting patterns of young children.

Parents, students and schools may or may not be ready for such interaction. To the extent that they are unprepared and fearful of racial change, the schools can become a focus of discontent. And the schools are, indeed, often unprepared and fearful of racial change. A study of riots and disruptions in public schools indicates that such disruptions are most likely to occur in a school with 6-25% minority population and lacking an integrated faculty--precisely the situation found in most urban schools as the neighborhoods they serve begin the process of racial transition (Reagen, 1972).

Because of these problems, most studies of changing neighborhoods emphasize the particular reluctance of families who have children they intend to enroll in the public schools to purchase a home in such a neighborhood. Wolf and Lebeaux (1967) note that the typical middle-class neighborhood undergoing racial change will retain users of parochial schools and older people without children, but not those intending to use the public schools. Hansen (1968) describes how, when Washington DC, desegregated its schools, real estate brokers were constantly phoning the school board to find out which school would now serve a given neighborhood. Clotfelter (1975a) found that, in the absence of school desegregation, white families living in racially mixed neighborhoods tended to be larger than those in predominantly white areas; he estimates a loss of 2 to 3% of the white student body in such areas for every 10% decrease in the proportion white within the neighborhood school. Rapkin and Grigsby (1960) found that white purchasers in racially mixed areas in Philadelphia were disproportionately Catholic; there were numerous parochial schools in the area, and few black Catholics.

A large number of rental units also tends to retard racial transition (Wolf and Lebeaux, 1967; Rapkin and Grigsby, 1960). In this connection it should be noted that many rental units will not admit families with children.[3] Such

policies keep black (and white) children out of the public schools in these areas, and bring in whites who are not likely to be affected by what is happening in the schools (and who do not have to make the degree of commitment involved in buying a house). Hence they retard racial transition Clotfelter (1975b), in a study of Atlanta, found that even being near a black area lowered housing prices but raised rentals. He also found that housing prices fell in tracts where high schools experienced greater desegregation. Finally, in a study of the Baxter area of Detroit (the name is fictitious), a neighborhood undergoing some racial transition, Wolf (1965) found that anxiety about the possibility of neighborhood change was particularly high for those with school-age children, and threatened the ability of the area to attract and hold white middle-class families with children. Particularly when the school becomes largely black, which may occur while the area is still majority white, the presence of that segregated school acts as a powerful deterrent for whites who might otherwise move in (Wegmann, 1975).

How the process of change proceeds in individual schools can be seen by consulting Table A-1 in the Appendix. Table A-1 lists 18 elementary schools in the Milwaukee Public School System which met either of the following criteria: (A) were between 20% and 80% minority in the fall of 1969, or (b) though below 20% minority in 1969, were at least 30% minority by the fall of 1975,[4] and were predominantly black in their minority composition (this latter requirement led to the omission of 4 schools which were predominantly Hispanic).[5] Table A-1 is so arranged that the year-to-year changes in minority and white ("other") enrollment is listed with each year's data, as is the year-to-year change in total enrollment. Where enrollment was affected by boundary or grade level changes, this is noted.

Previous research has shown that open enrollment (attending a non-district school at one's own expense) has relatively little effect at the elementary level, but a substantial effect at the secondary level (Wegmann, 1975). Hence these two levels are examined separately.

Examination of the pattern of change in these 18 elementary schools reveals occasional "surges" of white out-flow.[6] The overall pattern, however, is one of relatively steady, seemingly inexorable change. Throughout these years, while the white enrollment of the Milwaukee Public School System was declining, the black enrollment was growing (Rowe, 1975). Since the Milwaukee Public School System was in no way intervening to bring racial stability to these or any other schools,[7] it was these schools, located generally around the outer edges of the black ghetto, into which the growing black population moved and from which the shrinking white population withdrew.

Understanding changes in the racial composition of secondary schools is somewhat complicated by the fact that open enrollment is extensively used at this level, with many students leaving their home neighborhoods to attend schools which are more attractive to them (Wegmann, 1975). Table 1, derived from Rowe (1975), illustrates the impact of open enrollment. Most elementary children who use open enrollment travel only short distances.[8] Thus these moves generally have relatively little racial impact, as Table 1 illustrates.

The moves made by secondary students, on the other hand, have very strong racial impacts. Actually there are two impacts, somewhat in opposite directions. Minority students are leaving heavily minority schools, and attending more racially balanced schools; white students, however, are also leaving heavily minority schools in large numbers for schools with a higher proportion of white students. Thus schools like Wright Junior High (located along a convenient bus line) and Riverside High (located east of the black inner city) receive very substantial numbers of transfers. In the case of Riverside, so many black transfers were coming in that the School Board froze further transfers, fearing the school would become all black.

Table A-2 gives data on secondary schools similar to that given for elementary schools in Table A-1. Here too, despite the complications of open enrollment and

Table 1

Student Transfers, Milwaukee Public Schools[1]

Ethnic Category	From Schools: High in Minority Enrollment	From Schools: Low in Minority Enrollment	From Schools: Total	To Schools: High in Minority Enrollment	To Schools: Low in Minority Enrollment	To Schools: Total
			Elementary Schools			
Minority	1246 (84%)	243 (16%)	1489 (100%)	1337 (76%)	424 (24%)	1761 (100%)
White (Other)	415 (25%)	1239 (75%)	1654 (100%)	226 (12%)	1672 (88%)	1898 (100%)
			Junior High Schools			
Minority	822 (86%)	133 (14%)	955 (100%)	377 (29%)	912 (71%)	1289 (100%)
White (Other)	286 (34%)	557 (66%)	843 (100%)	5 (1%)	821 (99%)	826 (100%)
			Senior High Schools			
Minority	1455 (90%)	166 (10%)	1621 (100%)	997 (63%)	598 (37%)	1595 (100%)
White (Other)	893 (32%)	1865 (68%)	2758 (100%)	100 (3%)	2820 (97%)	2920 (100%)

1 Adapted from Rowe (1975:17-18). Note that the totals of transfers from schools do not match the totals of transfers to schools. These data were taken from Milwaukee Public School System computerized records as of March 3, 1975; some schools are quicker (and more accurate) chan others in reporting transfers received or sent. Hence the incompleteness (and inconsistency) of the data. Schools of high minority enrollment are defined as those of 50% or more minority enrollment; low minority enrollment is defined as less than 50% minority. Perhaps 700 of the secondary transfers are to Milwaukee Trade and Technical School, a specialty, non-district school. Milwaukee Trade and Technical School is a low minority school.

disproportionate minority drop-outs in the higher grades, the overall pattern is one of steady white withdrawal (or non-entrance), and partial black replacement. In these schools, as in the system as a whole, the level of downturn in white enrollment is greater than the increase in minority enrollment, and hence total enrollment is generally decreasing.

Social Class Levels and Neighborhood Change

One additional variable which may be closely related to white flight is the social class level of the white population in the changing neighborhood. Wolf (1965) reports that, in her study of the Russel Woods section of Detroit, the moving-order of white households was markedly affected by family income, with the more prosperous families moving first; racial attitudes were irrelevant. According to the Bureau of the Census (1975), whites moving from central cities to the suburbs in the same metropolitan area had average incomes of $15,532; whites moving from one part of the city to another had an average income of $12,362. Indeed, it can be observed that the disorders which have sometimes accompanied court-ordered busing seem to be concentrated in working and lower class areas, perhaps because these groups are more prone to physical expression of their frustrations, and perhaps because, unlike the middle class, they cannot easily afford to just quietly move away. Coleman's (1976a, 1976b; see also Pettigrew and Green, 1976) recent emphasis on the greater loss of white students from heavily black central city school districts surrounded by largely white suburban systems is certainly consistent with this view.

As a check to see whether the Milwaukee experience was influenced by white social class level, the 18 elementary schools in Table A-1 were divided into two groups. The first group of 9 schools served attendance areas whose mean income, based on 1970 census data, was estimated to be below $10,000 per year; the second group of 9 schools served areas where the estimated mean family income was above $10,000. The average number of percentage points decrease in white

attendance at the poorer schools, 1968-1975, was 31.9; in the wealthier areas, it was 46.4.[9] Taeuber and Taeuber (1965) found that "invading" blacks are often of higher socioeconomic status than the white residents they are replacing, and the whites leaving tend to be of higher socioeconomic status than those left behind. Apparently, then, these wealthier areas of Milwaukee were both more attractive to upwardly mobile blacks seeking better homes and schools, and also inhabited by whites who were more able to move if threatened by racial change in their schools and neighborhoods.

Taken as a whole, the research evidence indicates rather strongly that, so long as in-migration and natural increase provide a growing minority population, it is most unlikely that the process of school "desegregation" in these changing neighborhoods around the fringes of the inner city will be anything but a temporary situation between a time when the school is largely white and a time when it is largely black. Without government intervention to provide a stable level of integration in these schools, and simultaneously to provide adequate, safe and desirable living opportunities for minority citizens in areas other than those immediately surrounding the inner city, the process of resegregation cannot but continue. In some cases (such as Inglewood) this process has passed the boundary of the central city and is continuing on into the suburbs.

II. School Desegregation by Governmental Action

The second broad category of school desegregation situation occurs when either the courts, the local school board, or the executive branch of either federal or state government intervene to desegregate previously segregated schools. In the South, this has occasionally meant changing from a dual to a unitary, but still neighborhood, school system, particularly in small towns. In most southern towns of any size, however, as in most northern areas, segregated neighborhoods are large enough so that students must be transported in order to make school desegregation possible.

White flight may or may not occur in such situations (Rossell, 1975-76). White Plains, New York, which began busing students to desegregate its schools in 1964, did a six-year follow-up study in 1970. White students were doing as well or better academically than before integration, black students were doing better, and there had been no white flight (No Author, 1971b). Pasadena, California, on the other hand, recently completed a four-year follow-up study of their experience with school desegregation. There has been a significant drop in the achievement levels of students throughout the district. Simultaneously, white enrollment has declined precipitously, from 18,000 in 1969 to 11,000 in 1973 (Kurtz, 1975). While much of this wide variation in the consequences of school desegregation may be attributable to the particular characteristics of individual cities and school districts, there does seem to be some general patterns.

School Racial Proportion and Minority Social Class

A review of the research on white flight from school desegregation brought about through government intervention suggests that, when it occurs, the two most important factors may be the proportion and social class of minority students.

Studies dating back to the period immediately after the 1954 Brown decision indicate that resistance to desegregation is closely related to the proportion of

black students in the schools (Pettigrew and Cramer, 1959; Matthews and Prothro, 1964; Prothro, 1972; Bullock and Rodgers, 1975; Dye, 1968; Farley, 1975b; Cochran and Uhlman, 1973; Giles and Walker, 1975). Just as resistance to school desegregation seems to mount as the proportion of black students increases, so does the likelihood of white flight. Bosco and Robin (1973) report less than a 1% additional decline in white enrollment after busing began in the 18% black Kalamazoo school system, but an additional 4.7% decline in white enrollments in the 38% black Pontiac school system. Munford (1975) found that, in Mississippi, the black/white ratio in the community was as important as the black/white ratio in the school itself. He found that the population ratio explained 88% of the white flight. Clotfelter (1976a) found a similar relationship between proportion black and white flight in Mississippi, with particularly heavy flight from majority black schools. Lord (1975) mentions a situation in Nashville where the number of whites in one school declined from 560 to 268 when busing began to a 40% black inner city school; the white decline in a similar school was 15% when students were to be bused to a school which was only 20% black. (There was an additional factor, however; the former students were to be bused through high school, while the latter were to be bused only for one year.) In a major research project in which Giles and others were involved in Florida (Giles, Cataldo and Gatlin, 1975) the proportion of whites fleeing to private schools was found to have a 30% black "threshold" beyond which flight increased considerably, as well as a close connection to white family income. Coleman, in his most recent statements (1976a, 1976b) has stressed the relationship of proportion black and the availability of largely white suburbs to white flight from city schools. Pettigrew and Green (1976) do not disagree with this, though they argue that the high proportion black may be a surrogate for old housing stock, an unfavorable tax base, declining employment and other problems. Finally, a recent Gallup Poll reported in the Houston Post indicates that parental statements about objections to integrated schooling vary directly with the proportion of blacks in the hypothetical school, with only 3% of the northern white

parents objecting to a school with a few black students, 25% stating objections to a 50/50 situation, and 47% stating objections to a school more than half black. The fact that stated objections increase with increasing proportion black may index the fact that parental fears, be they of threatened social status, declining educational quality or threats to student safety are connected with their perception of the proportion of black students in a school. Whether these perceptions are accurate or not, they may have a real impact on behavior.

The impact of the proportion black on white flight may not only be a matter of the proportion itself, but the difference in social class level between black and white students. Memphis, Tennessee, and Jackson, Mississippi, for instance, are often cited as particularly striking examples of white flight. Farley (1975b) reports that shortly after the Memphis busing order, white enrollment in public schools fell by 20,000 while the number in private schools rose by 14,000. The New York Times reported (July 11, 1975) that Memphis lost 46% of its white public school students between 1970 and 1973. Indeed, Pettigrew and Green (1976) argue that Coleman's conclusions on white flight would not come out as they do were it not for the "untypical" results from Memphis and Atlanta. What is striking about white flight in Memphis is that it occurred in a situation where the black school population was both large (54% in 1968), and unusually poor. According to 1970 census data (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1972b), 35.7% of black families in Memphis were below the poverty line, compared with 5.7% of the non-black families. Thornberry (1970) reported that, by one estimate, Memphis was second among the major cities of the nation in poverty, and that 80% of this poverty was found in the black ghetto.

A similar example of a large and markedly poor black population producing white flight can be found in the case of Jackson, Mississippi. Egerton (1972) reports that the Jackson school system, 55% white before mid-year desegregation, lost 9000 whites and dropped to 40% upon desegregation, with 1500 additional whites

leaving the following year, dropping the proportion white to 36%. According to Time (December 15, 1975), half of all the white pupils in Jackson now attend private schools. What is striking about Jackson, as about Memphis, is the combination of both high proportion black and extreme poverty. Morrill (1965) cites Jackson as having the lowest proportion of median black family income to median white family income in the country. According to recent census data (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1972a), 27.3% of the black population in Jackson are high school graduates, compared to 77.5% of the non-black population; and 40.3% of the black families are below the poverty line compared to 6.3% of the non-black families. Jackson's median black family income in 1970 was $4,546.

Thus, rightly or wrongly, white (and middle-class minority) parents seem to perceive a school which is both heavily minority and poor as undesirable. Unless there is some strong evidence to the contrary, white and middle-class withdrawal may follow as a result of such perceptions. Conversely, when reading a report such as that by Ravis (1971) that a community with a 20% black population and no extremes of poverty or wealth has successfully integrated its school system, combining integration with some educational improvements, it should be no surprise that no white flight is reported.

Social Class Of White Students

Just as the social class level of the minority students involved in school integration may be important in determing whether (and how much) white flight occurs, so may the social class level of the white students. This may be true partly because of the class prejudices and values already discussed, and also partly because wealthier parents are more able to bear whatever costs might be involved in avoiding desegregated educational settings. The cost factor in moving to a white suburb is one example; when an entire metropolitan area is desegregated, the use of private schooling may be the only practical alternative for many families. It can be an expensive alternative. A recent Newsweek report, for

example, discusses the establishment of 9 private academies in Boston, with annual tuitions of around $500 per year (October 13, 1975).

Most of the reports on the use of private schooling deal with the South. According to the Time article noted above, half the white pupils of Jackson, Mississippi attend private schools, compared with 1/6 the white children of Charlotte, North Carolina. Private school attendance is also heavy in Memphis. Lord (1975), in a study of white flight to private schooling in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district, found that income alone explained 54% of white abandonment of the public schools after integration. He reports that 13 new private schools have opened there since the 1969 desegregation order. Cataldo, et al. (1975), in a careful study of parents who withdrew their children from public schooling in Florida after school desegregation, found that rejection rates for white students assigned to schools more than 30% black were 4% for low income students, 7% for middle income, and 17% for high income. It is important to note that while such losses may not represent a very high percentage of the public school population, they can deprive the public schools of a disproportionate number of students from the most affluent part of the community.

The available data would suggest, then, that the proportion and social class level of minority students, the social class level of the white students, and the cost and availability of schooling alternatives are among the variables which may have a significant relationship to whether or how much white flight may be expected to occur if there is government intervention to desegregate formerly segregated public schools. Munford (1975) also suggests that the stability of racial ratios in the population of the school district may have some influence.

III. A National Survey

How common is school racial instability nationally? This is a difficult question to anwer. Because of boundary changes, grade level changes, and student assignment changes associated with opening new buildings, only someone fully acquainted with the schools of a given school district can really tell if a particular school is actually the "same" school from one year to the next. As a result, most studies deal with either the schools in one locality, or national data by school district rather than by individual school. Despite this difficulty, however, there is really no way to understand what is happening in a school district without looking at what is happening in individual schools. It is at the level of the individual school that desegregation impacts on a given youngster, black or white. Therefore, despite the problems, it seemed worth the effort to attempt an investigation of school racial stability (and instability) on a national basis.

In 1968, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare conducted a survey of the racial proportions in all school districts in the United States with 3000 or more students, with a sampling of districts below 3000 (HEW, 1970). This material was published in 1970, and listed, district by district and school by school, the racial breakdowns of an estimated 43.9% of the nation's school districts enrolling an estimated 90.8% of elementary and secondary school students.[10]
The resulting book is a large volume containing some 1700 pages of fine print. By taking each tenth page (beginning with a page selected by using the first number appearing in a random number table), a sampling[11] of 7504 schools in 46 states was obtained.

An initial analysis of these schools made it immediately apparent that, at least as of 1968, there were really very few racially mixed schools to study. My objective was to follow up schools with at least 30% but no more than 70%

minority enrollment. There were only 535 schools which met these criteria, 7.1% of the sampling.

The next step was to consult more recent HEW data, gathered in the fall of 1972 (HEW, 1974), in order to determine what had happened to these 535 schools over the four-year interval. This was done, although a total of 190 schools could not be followed up for one reason or another. To begin with, 95 schools were not listed at all in the 1972 report, either because they were in small districts not in the 1972 sample, or because they had apparently been either closed or renamed; another 66 schools had changed grades significantly (they had added, deleted, or both more than one grade level, not counting changes at the kindergarten or pre-school level); and 29 more appeared to be special education schools of one kind or another. These latter almost always draw their students on a district-wide basis.

The remaining 345 schools, which at least appeared to be unchanged from 1968 to 1972, represent 4.6% of the original sampling of 7504 schools. Of these schools, 190 had a minority enrollment which was predominantly black, 151 predominantly Hispanic, and 4 oriental. Omitting the oriental schools,[12] table 2 summarizes the degree to which these schools remained within the 30%-70% range:

Table 2

1968-1972 Racial Change in Selected Schools
By Predominant Minority Group

1972 Situation	Black		Hispanic		Total
	N	%	N	%	
Lower minority proportion than 1968	65	34.2	24	15.9	89
Higher minority proportion than 1968, but still within the 30%-70% range	77	40.5	107	70.9	184
Higher minority proportion than 1968, and beyond 70% minority enrollment	48	25.3	20	13.2	68
Total	190	100.0	151	100.0	341

Examination of table 2 indicates that schools with predominantly black enrollments were both more likely to have a decrease in minority enrollment (even if a small one), and also more likely to resegregate beyond the 70% level than the schools where the predominant minority was Hispanic. Many of the former cases, as will be shown, are due to governmental action, which seems to be much more common in schools where the predominant minority group is black. The latter cases probably illustrate the tendency of schools with a predominantly black enrollment to "turn" more quickly.

Overall, the schools with increasing black enrollments from 1968 to 1972 had an average increase of 16.7 percentage points (s=14.2); the schools where the predominant minority group was Hispanic, on the other hand, and which increased in minority enrollment average 10.3 percentage points of change (s=7.0) over the 4-year period. Average <u>decreases</u> were 7.0 and 8.7 percentage points for black and Hispanic schools, respectively.

Is such a change more likely in large school systems, with their generally greater concentration of minority populations? When the data on schools with predominantly black minority enrollments are broken down by district size, the results are as follows:

Table 3

Racial Change, 1968-1972, by School District Size

Change in Racial Proportions	School District Size						
	Below 25,000		25,000-100,000		Above 100,000		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Decrease in Minority Enrollment	46	44.7	16	27.1	3	10.7	65
8% or Less Increase	34	33.0	11	18.6	7	25.0	52
Greater than 8% Increase	23	22.3	32	54.2	18	64.3	73
Total	103	100.0	59	99.9	28	100.0	190

$\chi^2 = 27.23$, df = 4, $p < .001$

As can be seen, there are large numbers of racially mixed schools in small school districts, and many of them seem quite stable; conversely, there are relatively few racially mixed schools in the largest school districts, and they seem much more unstable.

The problem remains, of course, that these data can be only suggestive. Without information from individual school districts, we cannot be sure whether any governmental action was taken to roll back or slow down racial transition. The 117 schools in 58 school districts which had 8 percentage points or less of increase in minority enrollment between 1968 and 1972 were therefore chosen as an object of special study, and letters were written to the superintendents of these districts asking for information on each of the 117 schools. (Each of these letters followed essentially the same format; a sample will be found in the Appendix.) This group was chosen because (a) we have ample evidence above to explain racial instability; it is stability that is interesting, and (b) it seemed more likely that a superintendent would answer a letter asking him to explain how one or more of his schools was <u>avoiding</u> segregation than why a given school became significantly more segregated (given the possible legal implications of the latter question, no matter how innocently asked).

Responses with information about 35 of these schools were received from 23 of the 58 school districts. Analysis of these responses reveals that the majority of them fell into one of three groups.

The first group consists of 13 schools (in 10 districts) where the relatively stable racial balance can be explained by some outside event, either initiated by the school system or somehow impinging on the school attendance area. In 10 of these schools (7 districts) the attendance area was changed, busing was used, or there was some other action by the school system. One of these schools has since been closed. The average number of percentage points of racial change in the remaining 8 who reported this, 1972-1975 is less than one percent. In 3 additional schools (in 3 districts) there was some event for which the school

district was not responsible which explains a drop in the proportion black between 1968 and 1972. One of these schools serves a neighborhood where much of the housing used by blacks has been demolished; the proportion black in this school has continued to decrease. Another has seen a black exodus from the area due both to demolition of existing housing and the opening of new housing developments located outside the school's attendance area; here both black and white populations are dropping with the proportions remaining stable. The third school is in a rural area 55 miles from a major metropolitan center, and is experiencing an influx of new white residents. Here the proportion black in the schools continues to drop.

The second group consists of 6 elementary schools located in low socioeconomic areas of 4 major cities. One of these schools has since closed. The remaining 5 have averaged 12 percentage points of increase in minority enrollment over the 1971-1975 period. The two most stable schools (only 2 and 4 percentage points of change) serve attendance areas which include white ethnic neighborhoods very resistant to racial (or ethnic) change. In each of the 6 cases both white and minority students are notably poor.

The third group contains 8 schools (7 school districts) located in stable rural areas or small towns. In 6 of the 8 cases this is the only school of this grade level in the district. These schools are markedly stable. Respondents sent the 1975 racial count for 5 of them, and the average change, 1972-1975, was slightly under 2 percentage points. Of the remaining 3 schools, one superintendent sent only the 1974 count (minority enrollment up 2 percentage points since 1972); the second noted that many younger black families were moving to the cities, and this might well reduce the proportion black in the future; and the third pointed out that the school in question was a small, rural school isolated from the rest of the district, and then went on to discuss the white flight occuring in the remainder of the area.

Finally, there were 8 schools (in 5 districts) which did not seem to fit any of these categories. One school has almost half its students coming from outside its attendance area for special education classes, and may soon be closed because of low enrollment. Another serves an upper middle class urban renewal area where both black and white residents are well off financially. Despite this fact, the school has gone from 50% minority in 1972 to 65% in 1975. A third school has changed its attendance area since 1972, though the superintendent provided no particular information which would explain its racial stability during the 1968-1972 period. The remaining 5 schools are from 2 major metropolitan districts. The 2 schools in one district (one junior high and one senior high) have gone from 71% to 88% minority in one case, and from 72% to 87% in the other (1972-1975). Both seem to be in moderate to low-income areas, but no additional information was given. The 3 schools in the remaining district could not be classified because no information was given beyond the 1975 racial count and the fact that there had been no change in the attendance areas. One of these schools has been discontinued, one has gone down 4 percentage points in minority enrollment (53% to 49%, 1972-1975), and the last school has gone from 36% minority to 46% minority during the same period.

Taken as a whole, these schools illustrate once again the close relationship between racial stability in schools and the underlying demographic trends of the area in which the school district is located. Whether because of white ethnic concentrations resistant to neighborhood change, or the stability of small town populations, it is essentially a stable or growing white population combined with a stable or decreasing minority population which seems to be a precondition for stable school desegregation.

IV. Concluding Comments

There is one aspect of desegregated schooling whose relationship to white flight has not, so far as I know, been formally investigated, and yet which seems to me to be at the heart of the whole issue: to what extent is the racially mixed school truly integrated? Are the students merely physically co-present, or are they relating to one another in an environment of mutual understanding and respect?

Anyone who has spent any time in racially mixed schools knows that students in these schools can be as distant from each other as if they were on separate planets. Blacks sit in one part of the cafeteria, whites in another, ditto in classrooms, assemblies, athletic events. School social events may even be held separately. Indeed, there is evidence that school desegregation may actually increase feelings of racial identity (Bobbitt, 1972; see also St. John, 1975). Petroni, Hirsch and Petroni (1970) conducted extensive interviews with students at a desegregated high school and found few reports of significant integration. In one study of three Florida secondary schools immediately after desegregation, Silverman and Shaw (1971) found that 95% of the communication observed as students left the school was white with white or black with black. Wolf and Simon (1975) concluded that, after 7 years of busing in one community, cross-racial friendship had not substantially increased. When this was pointed out to the faculty of one of the schools in the study (a school known for its open, "informal" approach) the faculty unanimously agreed that nothing had ever been done in the school to enhance the development of interracial understanding, friendship or communication. A similar situation (this time with white students in the minority) is described by Schafft (1975), who found the white children in a largely black school avoiding after-school sports, the bathrooms and the corridors, and using their homes rather than the school as the focus of their play activities. The attitude of the faculty was expressed by one of the most competent and liked teachers in the school: "If I am to teach, I cannot handle social problems as well."

This seems to be the attitude of American education generally. While a number of studies (St. John and Lewis, 1975; Felice, 1975 in addition to those already cited) have investigated interracial attitudes in desegregated schools, the literature is almost devoid of reports about programs which so structure the school that interracial cooperation and understanding are fostered (Aronson, et al., 1975 and Cohen, Lockheed and Lohman, 1976 are among the few examples). Yet it should be obvious that schools were never structured with a view to helping people understand each other, and there is no evidence that bringing students from different racial, class and neighborhood backgrounds into them will automatically lead to understanding, appreciation and friendship.

Perhaps the best analyses of the problems of desegregated versus integrated education are those of Mercer (1973a, 1973b, 1975; Mercer, Coleman and Harloe, 1974) who has obviously spent much time in racially mixed schools, and has done some excellent research on the relationship between interracial friendship, self-esteem and academic accomplishment. Yet even in these writings, excellent though they are analytically and descriptively, there is relatively little that could serve as a blueprint for the school administrator trying to decide what to do tomorrow in order to overcome the racial, class and cultural gulf that is so frequently a part of racially mixed education. There is a gap here which, in my judgment, may be the key not only to the control of white flight but to the survival of national commitment to school integration.

Summary and Conclusions

The issue of white flight from desegregated schools is an unusually complex one, and the research done to date has not been equal to the task of fully explaining all that is involved. Trying to understand this complicated phenomenon is much like trying to put together a giant, confusing jigsaw puzzle with many of the pieces missing. For almost every pattern there seems to be a contrary instance. The available research, like this paper, contains many gaps in the data presented,

many unanswered questions and many unverified assumptions. Nonetheless, the following tentative conclusions seem justified:

(1) White flight may or may not occur. Some schools maintain a high level of integration for years, others change slowly, and some resegregate very rapidly.

(2) Racially mixed schools located in areas bordering the inner city present some markedly different characteristics from schools located in school districts which have experienced district-wide desegregation. It is important not to extrapolate from the one situation to the other.

(3) In situations where there has been no governmental action to bring about desegregation, white flight seems to be linked more than anything else to the underlying demographic consequences of increased minority population growth. This growth takes place primarily in neighborhoods located on the edge of the inner city, as area after area "turns" from black to white. The schools "turn" more quickly than the area generally, and play a significant role in making this process relatively rapid and generally irreversible. School integration seems to be a necessary if not sufficient precondition for neighborhood integration.

(4) Decisions on where to purchase a home or where to send one's children to school are made, not only on the basis of the present situation, but on estimates of what is likely to happen in the future. The belief that presently integrated schools and neighborhoods will shortly resegregate is a major barrier to attracting whites to integrated settings.

(5) Little research has been done on the motivations behind white flight. Worries about the quality of education, student safety, and social status differences may be among the chief causes. To the extent that

this is true it could be expected that, other things being equal, school integration would more likely be stable and successful when combined with programs of educational improvement, in settings where concerns about safety are adequately met, and when programs of which parents can be proud are featured.

(6) School integration problems ordinarily represent both racial and class conflict. The degree of white flight to be expected when there is governmental intervention to desegregate schools may vary depending on the proportion of minority students who are being assigned to a given school, and the social class gap between the minority and white students

(7) White flight has widely varying costs in different settings. Moving to a nearby segregated suburb, moving outside a county school district, attending a parochial school, attending a private school, transferring to a segregated public school within the same system, or leaving town are examples of options which may or may not be present in a given situation. Each of these options, if available, will have different costs for different families, just as families will have varying abilities to meet these costs. So long as school desegregation is feared (or experienced) as painful, threatening or undesirable it can be expected that the number of families fleeing the desegregated school will be proportionate to the costs, and their ability to pay these costs.

(8) Although there is a certain degree of racial mixing in many public schools, there may also be a notable lack of cross-racial friendship, understanding and acceptance. Most of the superintendents who replied to the request for information on racial relations in the survey reported above answered that the racial situation was "calm," or that there were very few "incidents." Few made any claim that they had attained anything like genuine community, nor was there much indication that extensive efforts were being made toward this end.

Some Policy Implications

Given the incomplete nature of research on white flight, policy implications must be stated as personal opinion rather than as "proven" by the research which has been reviewed in this paper. The suggestions given below are so offered.

(1) There is serious need for a thorough, national study of white flight. Scattered case studies and sketchy national data are not enough. Unless the public schools of this country are going to continue to contribute heavily to the development of two nations, one white and one black, neither understanding nor trusting the other, white flight needs to be better understood--and avoided. It is significant that the references cited in this paper are from journals of law, political science, economics, education, geography, sociology, psychology and urban affairs. Any such study of white flight would have to be a significantly interdisciplinary effort.

(2) While it may be true that government intervention to desegregate schools may in some cases have precipitated white flight, it is equally true that the lack of any positive government intervention in the so-called "changing neighborhoods" surrounding the inner city has been responsible for continuous and ongoing resegregation. It might be helpful, in discussing problems of school integration in major metropolitan areas, to separate the discussion of what to do about inner city schools from the special problems of resegregating schools on the fringes of the ghetto. If the steady growth of the ghetto is to be arrested, it is in these areas that it must be done. A comprehensive approach to fostering racially stable and integrated neighborhoods and schools would go a long way toward removing the present connection in the minds of many Americans between school integration and eventual resegregation.

(3) Finally, there is a great need to emphasize the quality of school integration, and to develop and communicate practical approaches to overcoming the cultural and class barriers between the races. The available evidence does not suggest that, if one can just get black and white students into the same school building, the rest will take care of itself. It will not. School integration worthy of the name will only come about as the result of conscious, deliberate effort.

FOOTNOTES

1. The summary was prepared for Daniel P. Moynihan, who was reportedly assisting President Ford in dealing with school desegregation and busing issues, and is reported in Education Daily (October 20, 1975).
2. This finding may be stronger than it looks. Whites in the central city are poorer than whites in the suburbs, and the poor have more children. Hence one would expect to find more rather than fewer whites of school age in the central city.
3. A recent survey by Neighbors, a newsletter oriented toward inter-racial living, found, for example, that over 50% of the landlords in various sections of the San Francisco area would not rent to applicants with children.
4. The 1969-1975 data are taken from records kept by the Milwaukee Public School System; the author is a former member of the school board of that system. The 1968 data is from U. S. Department of H.E.W. (1970). I wish to express my appreciation to members of the Milwaukee Public School staff who helped me obtain this information. A few schools were omitted, although they technically met these criteria: Jackie Robinson (originally Peckham Annex), to which students have been bused from a number of areas and which is now a specialty, nondistrict school; Cass Street Elementary School, which receives a large number of minority students bused in from overcrowded schools outside its district; Jefferson, a non-district school for students with reading problems; Pleasant View School for the mentally handicapped; and Gaenslen School for the physically handicapped.
5. Data on the largely Hispanic school will appear again as this paper proceeds. I have generally set this material aside, preferring to concentrate primarily

on white flight from predominantly black schools. The whole issue of the predominantly Hispanic school is an interesting one; however, almost no research seems to have been done on this topic.

6. Note Clarke Street, 1970 and 1971, Clemens in 1971, Elm in 1969, Garden Homes in 1969, Fratney in 1974, Kilbourn in 1972, Silver Spring in 1973, Pierce in 1973, Story in 1975, Townsend in 1972 and 27th Street in 1974.
7. The author made a number of proposals intended to help reduce racial isolation while serving on the school board (1971-1974); almost without exception, they were voted down.
8. Often a particular home will be physically closer to one school although actually in the attendance zone of another; or a parent may want to avoid the child's crossing a busy street; or a youngster may need to be sent to the next closest school to avoid certain other children with whom he or she has associated and gotten in trouble. None of these changes take the child any great distance, particularly since elementary attendance areas are so much smaller than those for secondary schools.
9. The coefficient of correlation between estimated family income and the number of percentage points increase in minority enrollment is 0.45. Statistical significance at the .05 level (two-tailed) requires a correlation coefficient of 0.468.
10. Anyone familiar with large school systems knows that such data, no matter how "hard" they may look, should not be taken too seriously. Some schools keep much better records than others; some school employees are reluctant to ask a student his race, if they are not certain of it; some school systems use computerized record-keeping of variable accuracy, completeness and consistency. The HEW report itself (1970:v) mentions how often reports came in with the district total not matching the sum of the individual schools

in the district. Attendance itself changes daily in many large urban school systems (and the fact that state reimbursement is received on a per-pupil basis can be an invitation to keep less than perfectly accurate records). For all of these reasons these figures are at best approximate; hence I have generally rounded off percentages to the nearest whole number, rather than give an impression of more exactness than is justifiable.

11. I have used the word "sampling" deliberately, since this is clearly not a random sample of schools throughout the country. Vagaries of page layout make it at best a kind of cluster sample of a stratified sample. Given all the other uncertainties about these schools, it must be stated again that these results are intended to be only suggestive.

12. A valuable perspective on white flight from largely black schools might well come from the study of racial and ethnic change in schools generally. The four schools where the predominant minority group was oriental all increased in minority enrollment between 1968 and 1972, averaging almost 13 percentage points of change per school.

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Appendix

Table A-1
Elementary Schools

Clarke St.	Min			White			Total	
1968	409		52%	385		48%	794	
1969	571	162	64%	318	-67	36%	889	95
1970	528	-43	71%	213	-105	29%	741	-148
1971	546	18	83%	112	-101	17%	658	83
1972	886	340	87%	130	18	13%	1016	358
1973	871	-15	93%	69	-61	7%	940	-76
1974	701	30	95%	51	-18	5%	952	12
1975	896	-5	96%	40	-11	4%	936	-16

An annex to Clarke St. School was opened in 1972, changing the attendance pattern.

Clemens	Min			White			Total	
1968	39		15%	216		85%	255	
1969	41	2	17%	200	-16	83%	241	-14
1970	32	-9	14%	189	-11	86%	221	-20
1971	64	32	30%	148	-41	70%	212	-9
1972	77	13	36%	139	-9	64%	216	4
1973	122	45	51%	116	-23	49%	238	22
1974	140	18	59%	96	-20	41%	236	-2
1975	143	3	62%	89	-7	38%	232	-4

Congress	Min			White			Total	
1968	50		8%	609		92%	659	
1969	58	8	9%	561	-48	91%	619	-40
1970	65	7	11%	530	-31	89%	595	-24
1971	73	8	13%	511	-19	88%	584	-11
1972	89	16	16%	451	-60	84%	540	-44
1973	108	19	21%	405	-46	79%	513	-27
1974	128	20	26%	363	-42	74%	491	-22
1975	154	26	31%	344	-19	69%	498	7

Elm	Min			White			Total	
1968	369		58%	262		42%	631	
1969	404	35	71%	163	-99	29%	567	-64
1970	460	56	71%	192	29	29%	652	85
1971	486	27	78%	136	-56	22%	623	-29
1972	494	7	87%	74	-62	13%	568	-55
1973	488	-6	87%	76	2	13%	564	-4
1974	457	-31	90%	50	-26	10%	507	-57
1975	443	-14	91%	45	-5	9%	488	-19

Fratney	Min			White			Total	
1968	31		6%	524		94%	555	
1969	59	28	10%	512	-12	90%	571	16
1970	85	26	15%	568	-44	85%	553	-18
1971	131	46	24%	413	-55	76%	544	-9
1972	166	35	32%	356	-57	68%	522	-22
1973	212	46	38%	340	-16	62%	552	30
1974	287	75	53%	256	-84	47%	543	-9
1975	240	-47	52%	221	-35	48%	461	-82

Garden Homes	Min			White			Total	
1968	405		64%	229		36%	634	
1969	492	87	78%	136	-93	22%	628	-6
1970	669	177	85%	119	-17	15%	788	160
1971	634	-35	87%	91	-28	13%	725	-63
1972	674	40	95%	37	-54	5%	711	-14
1973	753	79	98%	18	-19	2%	771	60
1974	767	14	99%	9	-9	1%	776	5
1975	742	-25	99%	8	-1	1%	750	-26

Kilbourn	Min			White			Total	
1968	158		20%	649		80%	807	
1969	144	-14	19%	609	-40	81%	753	-54
1970	158	14	22%	546	-63	78%	704	-49
1971	146	-12	22%	504	-42	78%	650	-54
1972	137	-9	26%	399	-105	74%	536	-114
1973	169	32	33%	349	-50	67%	518	-18
1974	213	44	43%	287	-62	57%	500	-18
1975	208	-5	45%	251	-36	55%	459	-41

MacDowell	Min			White			Total	
1968	448		75%	152		25%	600	
1969	432	-16	70%	188	36	30%	620	20
1970	463	31	71%	192	4	29%	655	35
1971	629	166	78%	173	-19	22%	802	147
1972	612	-17	81%	145	-28	19%	757	-45
1973	573	-39	85%	101	-44	15%	674	-83
1974	638	65	88%	88	-13	12%	726	52
1975	602	-36	90%	69	-19	10%	671	-55

Pierce	Min			White			Total	
1968	335		39%	519		61%	854	
1969	387	52	44%	495	-24	56%	882	28
1970	402	15	47%	454	-41	53%	856	-26
1971	460	58	54%	396	-58	46%	856	0
1972	488	28	58%	349	-47	42%	837	-19
1973	590	102	81%	138	-211	19%	728	-109
1974	542	-48	75%	183	45	25%	725	-3
1975	479	-63	75%	162	-21	25%	641	-84

Silver Spring	Min			White			Total	
1968	22		8%	246		92%	268	
1969	40	18	14%	242	-4	86%	282	14
1970	47	7	16%	253	11	84%	300	18
1971	75	28	23%	258	5	77%	333	33
1972	207	132	44%	260	2	56%	467	134
1973	285	48	56%	197	-63	44%	452	-15
1974	291	36	63%	174	-23	37%	465	13
1975	278	-13	68%	132	-42	32%	410	-55

Transfers in to Silver Spring from outside its attendance area were halted in 1975 to try to prevent further racial imbalance.

Story	Min			White			Total	
1968	125		20%	516		80%	641	
1969	122	-3	19%	529	13	81%	651	10
1970	117	-5	18%	517	-12	82%	634	-17
1971	135	18	22%	486	-31	78%	621	-13
1972	161	26	27%	438	-48	73%	599	-22
1973	182	21	32%	388	-50	68%	570	-29
1974	201	19	36%	350	-38	64%	551	-19
1975	190	-11	41%	270	-80	59%	460	-91

38th St.	Min			White			Total	
1968	34		4%	831		96%	865	
1969	72	38	8%	810	-21	92%	882	17
1970	87	15	10%	814	4	90%	901	19
1971	123	36	14%	786	-28	86%	909	8
1972	193	70	23%	646	-140	77%	839	-70
1973	306	113	38%	503	-143	62%	809	-30
1974	430	124	54%	361	-142	46%	791	-18
1975	546	116	66%	282	-79	34%	828	37

35th St.	Min			White			Total	
1968	32		7%	400		93%	432	
1969	31	-1	8%	369	-31	92%	400	-32
1970	34	3	8%	393	24	92%	427	27
1971	46	12	12%	345	-48	88%	391	-36
1972	72	26	20%	296	-49	80%	368	-23
1973	118	46	30%	271	-25	70%	389	21
1974	135	17	36%	242	-29	64%	377	-12
1975	128	-7	37%	219	-23	63%	347	-30

31st. St.	Min			White			Total	
1968	121		14%	733		86%	854	
1969	184	63	22%	643	-90	78%	827	-27
1970	174	-10	24%	547	-96	76%	721	-106
1971	241	67	34%	467	-80	66%	708	-13
1972	283	42	43%	375	-92	57%	658	-50
1973	359	76	56%	278	-97	44%	637	-21
1974	427	68	66%	220	-58	34%	647	10
1975	413	-14	70%	176	-44	30%	589	-58

Townsend	Min			White			Total	
1968	74		12%	549		88%	623	
1969	82	9	13%	558	9	87%	640	17
1970	111	29	18%	498	-60	82%	609	-31
1971	189	78	30%	441	-56	70%	630	21
1972	231	42	44%	294	-147	56%	525	-105
1973	310	79	59%	214	-80	41%	524	-1
1974	353	43	69%	159	-55	31%	512	-12
1975	391	38	76%	122	-37	24%	513	1

Transfers in to Townsend from outside its attendance area were halted in 1975 to try to prevent further racial imbalance.

24th St.	Min			White			Total	
1968	46		8%	557		92%	603	
1969	78	32	12%	563	6	88%	641	38
1970	71	-7	11%	570	7	89%	641	0
1971	137	66	23%	464	-106	77%	601	-40
1972	171	34	32%	365	-99	68%	536	-65
1973	197	26	41%	281	-84	59%	478	-58
1974	227	30	52%	213	-68	48%	440	-38
1975	284	57	59%	194	-19	41%	478	38

27th St.	Min			White			Total	
1968	279		32%	581		68%	860	
1969	300	21	38%	500	-81	63%	800	-60
1970	334	34	40%	495	-5	60%	829	29
1971	368	34	47%	415	-80	53%	783	-46
1972	406	38	53%	360	-55	47%	766	-17
1973	436	30	58%	314	-46	42%	750	-16
1974	420	-16	67%	211	-103	33%	631	-119
1975	432	12	70%	187	-24	30%	619	-12

Wisconsin	Min			White			Total	
1968	236		33%	482		67%	718	
1969	213	-23	33%	437	-45	67%	650	-68
1970	182	-31	31%	409	-28	69%	591	-59
1971	196	14	33%	405	-4	67%	601	10
1972	218	22	39%	334	-71	61%	552	-49
1973	205	-13	43%	269	-65	57%	474	-78
1974	260	55	55%	217	-52	45%	477	3
1975	271	11	52%	250	33	48%	421	44

Table A-2

Junior High Schools

Edison	Min			White			Total	
1968	117		9%	1224		91%	1341	
1969	153	36	11%	1198	-26	89%	1351	10
1970	160	7	10%	1379	181	90%	1539	188
1971	189	29	12%	1330	-49	88%	1519	-20
1972	300	111	22%	1049	-281	78%	1349	-170
1973	525	225	38%	852	-197	62%	1377	28
1974	560	35	44%	715	-137	56%	1275	-102
1975	582	22	49%	608	-107	51%	1190	-85

Transfers into Edison from outside its attendance area were halted in 1975 to try to prevent further racial imbalance.

Peckham	Min			White			Total	
1968	429		38%	687		62%	1116	
1969	664	235	54%	571	-116	46%	1235	-119
1970	830	166	72%	324	-247	28%	1154	-81
1971	696	-134	88%	92	-232	12%	788	-366
1972	776	80	97%	23	-69	3%	799	11
1973	617	-159	99%	8	-15	1%	625	-174
1974	724	107	97%	22	14	3%	746	121
1975	649	-75	98%	15	-7	2%	664	-82

The attendance pattern of Peckham was changed in 1974, when the ninth grade was assigned to Washington.

Wright	Min			White			Total	
1968	240		21%	898		79%	1138	
1969	226	-14	21%	875	-23	79%	1101	-37
1970	175	-51	17%	842	-33	83%	1017	-84
1971	192	17	18%	866	24	82%	1058	41
1972	223	31	21%	836	-30	79%	1059	1
1973	261	38	25%	772	-64	75%	1033	-26
1974	257	-4	27%	678	-94	73%	935	-98
1975	238	-19	29%	570	-108	71%	808	-127

Steuben	Min			White			Total	
1968	60		5%	1197		95%	1257	
1969	100	40	7%	1249	52	93%	1349	92
1970	105	5	8%	1261	12	92%	1366	17
1971	167	62	13%	1100	-161	87%	1267	-99
1972	185	18	15%	1023	-77	85%	1208	-59
1973	349	164	33%	693	-330	67%	1042	-166
1974	389	40	48%	424	-269	52%	813	-229
1975	352	-37	47%	403	-21	53%	755	-58

Grade 9 was assigned to Washington in 1974. Transfers into Steuben from outside its attendance area were halted in 1975 to try to prevent further racial imbalance.

Senior High Schools

Riverside	Min			White			Total	
1968	564		30%	1302		70%	1866	
1969	649	85	35%	1182	-120	65%	1831	-35
1970	663	14	39%	1046	-136	61%	1709	-122
1971	728	65	44%	943	-103	56%	1671	-38
1972	827	99	51%	785	-158	49%	1612	-59
1973	917	90	60%	613	-172	40%	1530	-82
1974	705	-212	60%	464	-149	40%	1169	-361
1975	622	-83	57%	467	3	43%	1089	-80

Transfers into Riverside from outside its attendance area were halted in 1974 to try to prevent further racial imbalance.

Washington	Min			White			Total	
1968	224		8%	2644		92%	2868	
1969	378	154	14%	2379	-265	86%	2757	-111
1970	536	158	21%	1979	-400	79%	2515	-242
1971	703	367	32%	1885	-94	68%	2788	273
1972	1012	109	41%	1437	-448	59%	2449	-339
1973	1256	244	48%	1339	-98	52%	2595	146
1974	1645	389	56%	1294	-45	44%	2939	344
1975	1695	50	63%	1014	-280	37%	2709	-230

Washington changed from a 10-12 school to a 9-12 school in 1974. Transfers into Washington from outside its attendance are were halted in 1975 to try to prevent further racial imbalance.

West	Min			White			Total	
1968	780		53%	689		47%	1469	
1969	795	15	57%	600	-89	43%	1395	-74
1970	865	70	61%	557	-43	39%	1422	27
1971	940	75	68%	445	-112	32%	1385	-37
1972	1007	67	75%	343	-102	25%	1350	-35
1973	1075	68	79%	290	-53	21%	1365	15
1974	977	-98	82%	219	-71	18%	1196	-169
1975	1001	24	88%	137	-82	12%	1138	-58

A-10

UH CLC
University of Houston at Clear Lake City
2700 Bay Area Boulevard
Houston, Texas 77058
(713) 488-7170

March 19, 1976

Superintendent of Schools
Johnson School District
Johnson, Missouri 63000

Dear Sir:

I am writing to ask your help in understanding some research results on the so-called "white flight" phenomenon. I have been studying a nationwide sample of 7504 schools drawn from the 1968 HEW Directory; some of the schools in your district are part of this sample.

I am writing you particularly because a number of researchers have discussed "white flight" without, apparently, ever consulting the people who are closest to what is actually happening in the schools. Since you are in a position to know both the schools and the community they serve, I feel that your comments will be invaluable in understanding what the statistical results actually mean.

Specifically, Smith School is one of the schools in the sample. According to HEW data, it went from 33% minority in 1968 to 28% in 1972. In contrast to many schools which have resegregated, Smith was apparently quite stable over the 1968-1972 period. Do you have any observations on the reasons for this stability?

I would be particularly interested in knowing:

a) whether the attendnace area of the school was changed between the fall of 1968 and the fall of 1972, and whether this had any effect on the racial balance.

b) any impressions you might have on the relative levels of education and income in the families from which the white and minority children come.

c) any observations you might have on the quality of racial relations in the school (tense? calm? much cross-racial friendship? seen as a major issue?).

d) the racial balance in the school in the fall of 1975.

Your cooperation is important, and very much appreciated. All replies will be treated confidentially, and any use made of answers to questions (b) and (c) will be anonymous. I will be happy to send you a copy of the final report if you would like one.

If you could, I would really appreciate a reply this month (March). I hope to give a preliminary report on this research at the April meetings of the American Educational Research Association. The statistical work is done, but your comments will be an invaluable help in making the results meaningful.

Sincerely,

Robert G. Wegmann
Associate Professor